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Department of State
TELEGRAM

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 UPW-01 SAL-02 IO-11 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-06 H-02 INR-06 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 P-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12 RSR-01 /108 W

067201

R 201100Z SEP 71
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0176
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG
USDEL FRANCE
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 1509

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJ: UPPER HOUSE DEBATE ON ELECTIONS

REF: SAIGON 15022

1. SUMMARY AND COMMENT: THE UPPER HOUSE IS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED TO MEET SEPTEMBER 22 TO CLOSE OUT THE PRESENT EXTRAORDINARY SESSION, BUT ALSO TO DEBATE THE PRESIDENTIAL AND LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS. SOME PRESENTLY UNSURE POLITICAL MANEUVERINGS MAY HALT THESE PLANS, BUT THERE NOW APPEARS TO BE A FAIR CHANCE THAT THE UPPER HOUSE MAY PASS A RESOLUTION ON THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, WHICH WOULD CONTRIBUTE A FURTHER REDUKE TO PRESIDENT THIEU. END SUMMARY

2. THE UPPER HOUSE IS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED TO BE CALLED INTO SESSION SEPTEMBER 22 AND TWO RESOLUTIONS ON THE ELECTIONS ARE NOW TO BE OFFERED. ONE WILL BE BY 20 SENATORS CONCERNING VOTING IRREGULARITIES IN THE LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS IN VINH BINH AND BAC LIEU. THE SECOND WILL BE BY SENATOR TRUONG TIEN DAT ASKING PRESIDENT THIEU TO RESIGN UNDER ARTICLE 56 OF THE CONSTITUTION

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY Jean J. J. J. DATE 1/26/82

RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE

TS AUTH. REASON(S)

ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐

DECLASSIFIED ☒ RELEASABLE ☒

RELEASE DENIED ☐

PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

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AND TURN THE PRESIDENCY OVER TO THE UPPER HOUSE CHAIRMAN FOR THREE MONTHS TO ORGANIZE NEW ELECTIONS. AN EXPERT ON THE CONSTITUTION, DAT UNTIL RECENTLY WAS CONSIDERED PRO-EXECUTIVE BUT HAS BEEN OUTSPOKENLY CRITICAL OF THIEU RECENTLY.

3. SENATORS HUYNH VAN CAO AND TRAN QUANG THUAN HAVE SEPARATELY TOLD EMBOFFS THE DAT RESOLUTION IS ALSO SUPPORTED BY THE MAU SLATE. THUAN CLAIMS THE RESOLUTION SHOULD GAIN SUPPORT FROM ABOUT 36 SENATORS AND PASS QUICKLY BUT WOULD OF COURSE NOT BE LEGALLY BINDING ON THIEU.

4. WE HAVE ALSO HEARD THERE MAY BE ANOTHER RESOLUTION BACKED BY THE USUALLY PRO-EXECUTIVE BUT RECENTLY DISENCHANTED SENATOR DAN VAN SUNG WHICH WILL ACCEPT THE OCTOBER 3 UNCONTESTED ELECTION BUT URGE THE PRESIDENT TO TAKE SUBSEQUENT ACTION TO RESTORE THE REGIME'S PRESTIGE. THIS Milder RESOLUTION MAY BE INTRODUCED BY SENATOR TRAN THE MINH, WHO WOULD BE SERVING AS RAPPORTEUR FOR THE SESSION.

5. SENATOR CAO, HOWEVER, INFORMED US SEPTEMBER 20 THAT HE IS PRESENTLY WORKING TO BLOCK THE HOLDING OF A SESSION SINCE HE DOES "NOT WANT TO KNOCK THIEU DOWN NOW," AND FEELS SENATE RESOLUTIONS WOULD BE HARMFUL. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHETHER CAO CAN OVERCOME SENTIMENT IN FAVOR OF HAVING A SESSION.
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